

Message Text

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INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
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AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY), PEPR, PINT, GW, US

SUBJECT: BONN AS A SUMMIT SITE: A JOURNALIST'S VIEW

1. THE MAY 9 ISSUE OF THE CONSERVATIVE NATIONAL DAILY, FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG, DESCRIBED SOME PRACTICAL PROBLEMS OF SUMMITRY IN BONN. WITH THE THOUGHT THAT THIS ARTICLE MAY BE OF INTEREST TO THOSE WHO ARE PLANNING PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT IN JULY, THE EMBASSY HAS PREPARED AN INFORMAL TRANSLATION.

2. BEGIN TEXT

FOR LARGE STATE VISITS, BONN REMAINS A SOMEWHAT PROVISIONAL CAPITAL
LITTLE SPACE, GREAT DISTANCES, AND TRAFFIC CHAOS

WHENEVER BONN HAS CONCLUDED A HIGH-LEVEL STATE VISIT,
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WHEN THE FLAGS IN FRONT OF THE CHANCELLERY AND ALONG ADENAUERALLEE HAVE BEEN LOWERED, AND WHEN THE COMMUNIQUEES AND DECLARATIONS HAVE BEEN FILED AWAY, THERE ALWAYS REMAINS ONE QUESTION: CAN THE CAPITAL ON THE RHINE, GIVEN ITS STATURE AND POSSIBILITIES, REALLY COPE WITH SUCH OCCASIONS? IT WAS ESPECIALLY BREZHNEV'S VISIT, WITH ITS TURBULENT CONCOMMITANT CIRCUMSTANCES,

THAT BROUGHT BONN ONCE AGAIN UNDER THIS MAGNIFYING-GLASS.

IT HAS FOR DECADES BEEN ONE OF THE FACTS OF LIFE THAT ALL TRAFFIC IN DOWNTOWN BONN COMES TO A STANDSTILL WHEN A STATE VISITOR WITH HIS ENTOURAGE IS BEING DRIVEN TO THE FEDERAL PRESIDENT'S VILLA HAMMERSCHMIDT OR TO THE FEDERAL CHANCELLERY. WITH BUT TWO OR THREE MAIN ARTERIES OF TRAFFIC, BONN HAS NO ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO OFFER. HELICOPTERS ARE A HELP ONLY IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES; THE BLACK LIMOUSINES WITH THEIR PENNANTS FORM PART OF THE CEREMONY.

THINGS GET EMBARRASSING WHEN APPOINTMENTS ARE DELAYED BECAUSE AN OFFICIAL VISITOR (AS JUST HAPPENED TO BREZHNEV) IS HELD UP ON THE FREEWAY WITH TIRE TROUBLES, OR BECAUSE A THUNDERSTORM REDUCES THE SPEED OF HIS MOTORCADE. IT REALLY IS ONLY A MAKESHIFT SOLUTION TO PUT UP OFFICIAL VISITORS THIRTY MILES AWAY, NO MATTER HOW IDYLIC GYMnich CASTLE MAY BE WITH ITS PARK AND MOATS. THERE ARE FEW THINGS THAT BONN NEEDS MORE URGENTLY AT THIS TIME THAN A GUEST HOUSE SUITABLE FOR STATE VISITS.

BONN CAN JUST ABOUT COPE WITH THE SITUATION WHEN INDIVIDUAL VISITORS ARE INVOLVED. EVEN HUNDREDS OF NEWSMEN
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THUS FAR ALWAYS FOUND A WAY TO CABLE THEIR REPORTS, AND IN THE CASE OF THE BREZHNEV VISIT CERTAINLY NO REPORT REMAINED UNPUBLISHED DUE TO TECHNICAL REASONS. ALSO, THERE HAVE THUS FAR BEEN NO REPORTS THAT MEMBERS OF FOREIGN DELEGATIONS HAD TO SPEND THE NIGHT IN THE STREETS FOR LACK OF ACCOMMODATION, OR THAT THEY LEFT THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC SUFFERING FROM HUNGER. THE NEXT EVENT, THE VISIT OF THE BRITISH QUEEN AT THE END OF MAY, WILL TAX THE SOCIAL, RATHER THAN THE CATERING, ABILITIES OF THE FEDERAL CAPITAL, AND THE FEDERAL PRESIDENT WILL SEE TO IT THAT OFFICIAL BONN WILL NOT APPEAR SHABBY.

THE SITUATION GETS REALLY DIFFICULT, THOUGH, WHEN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC IS CHOSEN TO HOST A BIG INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE. THIS WILL HAPPEN TWICE IN THE WEEKS TO COME. AS FAR AS THE JULY 6-7 EUROPEAN SUMMIT IS CONCERNED, CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAS COME TO BONN'S RESCUE. ABIDING BY THE MOTTO "IT MUST NOT ALWAYS BE THE CAPITAL," THE EUROPEAN HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT WILL MEET IN BREMEN, WHERE ALL INFRASTRUCTURE CONCERNS HAVE BY NOW BEEN REMOVED, FOR BOTH THE OFFICIAL DELEGATIONS

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AND THE APPROXIMATELY 800 JOURNALISTS (ABOUT AS MANY AS COVERED BREZHNEV'S VISIT).

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SUMMIT IN MID-JULY THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO BY-PASSING BONN, THOUGH MANY PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO DO JUST THAT. BONN AUTHORITIES CONCERNED WITH THE PREPARATIONS FEEL LIKE THE AMERICAN COAST GUARD DOES WHEN A HURRICANE IS APPROACHING. THE MAJOR PROBLEM IS NOT WHERE THE SEVEN HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT WILL STAY. PRESIDENT CARTER WILL PROBABLY STAY IN THE AMERICAN MINISTER'S RESIDENCE, AS HIS PREDECESSORS DID WHEN THEY VISITED BONN; OTHERS WILL FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE AND SPEND THE NIGHT IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COLONIES. BUT APART FROM A BIG FLOOD OF DELEGATIONS, BONN ON JULY 16 AND 17 MUST ALSO HANDLE AT LEAST 2,500 JOURNALISTS--AN ABSOLUTE RECORD. THE AMERICANS, JAPANESE, CANADIANS, AND OTHERS HAVE ALREADY BOOKED OUT
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ENTIRE HOTELS. NEVERTHELESS, POSSIBLY WITH CITY HALL, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO APPEAL TO BONN'S CITIZENRY: GIVE THEM BED AND BREAKFAST...

WHAT WILL ALSO BE VERY DIFFICULT AT THE BONN SUMMIT-- AND AT THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING DRESS REHEARSAL IN THE FORM OF THE CARTER VISIT--WILL BE FEEDING THE JOURNALISTS WITH NEWS. IT IS TRUE THAT, AS A RULE, THE VARIOUS NATIONAL CONTINGENTS OBTAIN THEIR OWN INFORMATION. HOWEVER, FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF THE LONDON SUMMIT LAST YEAR, THERE WILL HAVE TO BE AT LEAST ONE JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE. BONN'S PLANNERS AT FIRST THOUGHT OF THE PLENARY HALL OF THE BUNDESTAG, BUT IT WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE, BECAUSE IT IS BEING PREPARED FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS IN SEPTEMBER. PLANNERS ARE NOW LOOKING FOR ANOTHER HALL. A CONGRESS WILL BE MEETING IN THE BEETHOVEN HALL. THERE REMAIN ONLY GODESBERG'S MUNICIPAL HALL OR BONN'S MUNICIPAL THEATER, BOTH OF WHICH ARE NOT WELL LOCATED IN RELATION TO THE FEDERAL CHANCELLERY.

IN ANY CASE, THIS SUMMIT WILL BE A TEST OF COOPERATION BETWEEN FEDERAL AUTHORITIES IN BONN AND THE CITY. NEVER BEFORE HAVE FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS BEEN SO DEPENDENT ON THE MUNICIPAL HOSTS IN BONN'S BRAND NEW CITY HALL. NORMALLY, BONN'S CITY COUNCILLORS STAND IN THE SHADOW OF STATE VISITS AND SIMILAR EVENTS. THEY KEEP THEIR GOLDEN BOOK READY OR MAKE AVAILABLE THE MUNICIPAL THEATER, AS THEY DID FOR A GALA CONCERT OF BOLSHOI ARTISTS WHEN BREZHNEV WAS HERE. OR THEY CANCEL, AS THEY DID LAST SATURDAY, BONN'S "FLEA MARKET" TO REMOVE AT LEAST ONE SOURCE OF TURMOIL. MOSTLY, HOWEVER, THE CITY OF BONN AS A POLITICAL ENTITY IS NOT A MEMBER OF UNCLASSIFIED

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THE PARTY.

AN EXCEPTION IN THIS RESPECT WAS LEONID BREZHNEV'S SECOND VISIT. EVEN BEFORE THIS EVENT, BONN'S LORD MAYOR DANIELS (CDU) ENGAGED IN LIVELY POLITICAL SPARRING WITH THE EASTERN WORLD POWER. HALF A MONTH AGO, CITY HALL RECEIVED A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF MOSCOW'S MUNICIPAL SOVIET, THAT IS, FROM DANIELS' COLLEAGUE ON THE MOSKVA. IT CONTAINED AN URGENT APPEAL THAT CITY FATHERS AND CITIZENS OF BONN "TAKE ACTIVE STEPS" AGAINST THE NEUTRON BOMB. DANIELS REACTED COOLY AND POINTED OUT WHERE AUTHORITY FOR SUCH

MATTERS RESTS.

BONN'S CITY CHIEF SHOWED LESS RESTRAINT WHEN SOVIET
CORRESPONDENTS LAST WEEK ASKED HIM ABOUT BREZHNEV'S
VISIT. DANIELS POINTED OUT THAT ESPECIALLY IN BONN,
"REPRESENTING BERLIN AS THE CAPITAL," THIS VISIT MADE
IT PAINFULLY CLEAR THAT USSR POLICY WAS PRIMARILY
RESPONSIBLE FOR PREVENTING BERLIN FROM BEING THE
CAPITAL OF GERMANY. AS A RESULT, THE USSR HEAD OF
STATE (JUST AS FIVE YEARS AGO) PASSED UP THE OPPOR-
TUNITY TO SIGN HIS NAME IN THE GOLDEN BOOK OF THE
DEPUTY CAPITAL.
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